

Message Text

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TAGS: UN PFOR OAU ET

SUBJ: SYG CABLE TO OAU

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF CABLE SENT BY SYG WALDHEIM TO MAJOR GENERAL BARRE, PRESIDENT OF SOMALIA, WHO IS CURRENTLY CHAIRMAN OF ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU);

"I AM GREATLY CONCERNED OVER REPORTS WHICH CONTINUE TO COME FROM ETHIOPIA ABOUT TRAGIC FIGHTING IN ERITREA, AND RESULTANT CASUALTIES AND HARDSHIPS BEING SUFFERED BY CIVILIAN POPULATION. THIS SITUATION HAS GIVEN RISE TO INTERNATIONAL CONCERN AND IN RECENT DAYS I HAVE RECEIVED A NUMBER OF MESSAGES CALLING FOR HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION BY UNITED NATIONS. MY IMMEDIATE CONCERN IN THIS SITUATION IS TO PREVENT FURTHER LOSS OF LIFE AND TO RELIEVE SUFFERING WHICH ARMED CONFLICT CONTINUES TO IMPOSE ON CIVILIAN POPULATION.

"I HAVE ADDRESSED APPEALS TO ALL SIDES AND HAVE ALERTED VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES TO MAKE AVAILABLE THEIR SERVICES SHOULD THESE BE REQUESTED. I AM CONFIDENT THAT ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, WHICH HAS ALWAYS TAKEN VALUABLE HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVES IN SITUATIONS OF THIS NATURE, WILL ALSO WISH TO EXERCISE ITS GOOD OFFICES IN THE MATTER."

2. AT NOON BRIEFING 11 FEB UN SPOKESMAN POWELL COMMENTED ON ABOVE TELEGRAM AS FOLLOWS:

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"IT EXPRESSES SYG'S HUMANITARIAN CONCERN OVER THE

CONTINUED FIGHTING THERE AND ITS EFFECT ON CIVILIAN POPULATION. WALDHEIM SENT IT IN RESPONSE TO MANY REQUESTS FOR UN INTERVENTION. HE HAS DIRECTED APPEALS TO ALL SIDES. HE IS CONFIDENT OAU WILL EXERCISE ITS GOOD OFFICES IN THE MATTER. WALDHEIM HAS BEEN IN TOUCH BY CABLE WITH TEDLA BAIRU, FORMER FIRST CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF ERITREA NOW IN SWEDEN, AND WITH VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES INCLUDING LEAGUE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES, UNICEF, THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, THE UNDISASTER RELIEF OFFICE IN GENEVA. THE APPROACH TO ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT WAS MADE LAST SATURDAY MORNING TO THE CHARGE OF UN MISSION EXPRESSING WALDHEIM'S CONCERN. HE HAD MESSAGE FROM BAIRU BY CABLE. BAIRU CALLED HIMSELF THE HEAD OF THE LIBERATION FRONT OF ERITREA. WALDHEIM WAS INTERVENING ON A 'PURELY HUMANITARIAN BASIS' AND IS NOT INVOLVED IN ANY WAY IN THE POLITICAL SITUATION; HIS ONLY CONCERN IS OVER LOSS OF LIFE AND HUMAN SUFFERING. THE REASON THE SYG DIRECTED AN APPEAL TO THE OAU IS BECAUSE OF ITS INTEREST IN THE EHTIOPIAN/ERITREA SITUATION."

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